4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 54-a] Pátzcuaro

227 **Fishing techniques and associated tools.**—Fishing with native Tarascan nets predominates in Lakes Pátzcuaro and Zirahuén. Both the net and the hook were employed in pre-Conquest times,[121] but at present the latter is of secondary importance. The large *chinchorros* (uarúka) and the smaller čerémekuas are the only nets used today. The former is a seine, employed for catching *pescado blanco* and *trucha* in midlake, while the latter, a gill net with a fine mesh, is placed along shore to trap the small č'arári and k'uerépu[122] (pl. 8). Prior to the introduction of the *trucha* the picturesque *mariposa* or butterfly nets (k'orueča) were commonly employed for catching t'íru. Owing to the near extinction of this fish, these nets are no longer seen, except in Janitzio, where they are displayed to tourists. The hand net (*cuchara*, uirípu, ɬiúru) has likewise practically disappeared. All nets used by the Pátzcuaro fisherman are home-woven.

Other fishing tools include the spear (*arpón*, atárakua), now used to kill *trucha* in shallow water, and the hook (*anzuelo*, jupíkata-tárakua).[123] Shore traps are occasionally used by a few fishers of Uricho and Puácuaro. Fish poisons are not employed. To improve habitat conditions of open-water fish, such as *pescado blanco*, portions of the lake bottom are often cleared of aquatic grasses (*zacate*, puɬúrini) with the uarómatárakua, a pole 3 m. long with a sickle attached to the end.

501 An indispensible fishing tool and means of water transport is the Tarascan canoe, a flat-bottom dugout hewn from a pine or fir log. Owing to the

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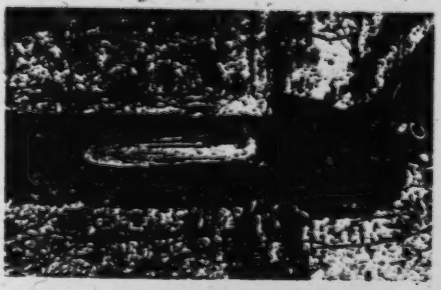
226 [121] According to the Relación de Michoacán, Tarascan officials oversaw the net fishermen and those who fished with hooks (p. 16). Moreover, "... *de noche pescan con red y de día con anzuelo*" (p. 149).

[122] The *chinchorro* often measures 100 to 180 m. long and 8 m. wide. In the center is a pocket (*bolsa*) of fine mesh. Four people are necessary to handle the net in midlake, and it is usually operated from one boat. The net is manipulated by ropes (angítatárakuela), 80 to 90 m. long attached to its two ends. Once the net is cast, it is formed in a semicircle and slowly pulled forward and upward, while the catch settles into the *bolsa*. The čerémekua is usually 6 to 8 m. long and 40 cm. wide. This net is used somewhat like a trap. It is fastened to poles in shallow water near the shore and left for 2 or 3 hours. When lifted, the net usually contains several small littoral fish, their heads caught in the fine mesh. This type of čerémekua can be operated by one person. A longer čerémekua (often 100 m. in length) with a coarser mesh is sometimes used to catch *pescado blanco* in deep water offshore. Like the smaller variety, it is operated by one person, who attaches the top of the net to log floats and one end to his canoe. The net and boat are permitted to drift in midlake usually through the night, while the attendant gathers in the trapped fish from time to time.

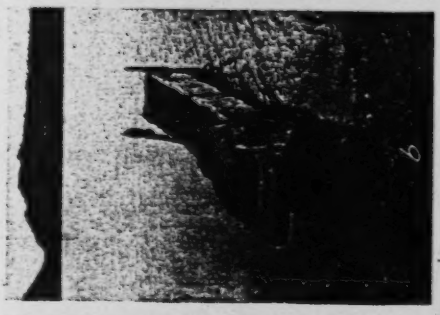
[123] The atárakua is composed of a stalk of *carrizo* 4 m. long, to the end of which is attached a long barbed-iron point (60 cm. long). The spear is hurled either above or beneath the water. Regarding the use of the *anzuelo*, the cord supporting the hook is usually attached to a piece of *carrizo* or *otate*, 1 m. long, a series of which is permitted to float on the water. A strike is indicated by the tilting of the stick, which is hurriedly picked up by the boatman.

[314]

[133]



[501]



[22]

[313]

[End-plate 8]